

STOCKTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

POLICE CANINE UNIT
SUBJECT

DATE: May 31, 2016

NO: Q-1e

FROM: CHIEF ERIC JONES

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

INDEX: CANINE UNIT
USE OF CANINES
POLICE CANINE BITES/INCIDENTS

I. POLICY

- A. The Stockton Police Department will maintain and utilize a Police Canine Unit. The canines will be assigned to the Patrol Section of the Field Operations Division, or other sections as needed, and will be used to supplement police operations in the apprehension of criminal offenders.
- B. As with all community interactions, Stockton Police Officers will consider the four guiding principles of Procedural Justice as they relate to the use of police canines. Those principles are:
 - 1. Respect – treating all with dignity and respect
 - 2. Voice – listening and allowing residents to be heard
 - 3. Neutrality – making decisions in a fair and impartial manner
 - 4. Trustworthiness – acting in ways that foster trust, are perceived as legitimate, and exemplify fairness of process
- C. A police canine may be used to locate and apprehend a suspect if the canine handler reasonably believes the individual has either committed or is about to commit a serious criminal offense and if any of the following conditions exist:
 - 1. There is a reasonable belief the individual poses an immediate threat of violence or serious harm to the public, the canine handler, or other police officers.
 - 2. The individual is physically resisting arrest and the use of a canine reasonably appears to be necessary to overcome such resistance.
 - 3. The individual is believed to be concealed in an area where entry by police personnel would pose a threat to the safety of the officers or public.
 - 4. Crowd control situations with the approval of the Watch Commander or on-duty supervisor.
 - 5. It is recognized that situations may arise which do not fall within the provisions set forth in this policy. In any such case, a standard of reasonableness shall be used to determine if a canine should be deployed.

NOTE: Absent the presence of one or more of the above conditions, mere flight from pursuing officer(s) shall not serve as good cause for the use of a canine to apprehend an individual.
- D. Canines may be used for public relations demonstrations with the intended purpose of highlighting the skills and obedience of police canines, and developing an atmosphere of confidence and trust between the public and our canine handlers.
- E. A police canine shall not be used to apprehend a juvenile who is known to be under 14 years of age (Exception: In the defense of an officer or other person's life that is in immediate danger)
- F. Stockton Police canines may be used to assist outside law enforcement agencies with the approval of the Watch commander or an on-duty supervisor.

- G. A police canine shall not be used if a person is passively resisting, not following orders, not aggressive, or not posing an immediate threat to the safety of officer(s) or others around.

II. **PROCEDURE**

A. Staffing the Police Canine Unit

1. The Stockton Police Canine Unit will be directed by a designated lieutenant who will report to a designated captain of the Field Operations Division. Working in cooperation with the lieutenant will be a designated coordinator, the Department trainer, and/or the in-service trainer. The coordinator will be responsible for, but not limited to, the following duties:
 - a. Liaison with Stockton Police Administration staff.
 - b. Liaison with other police agency canine unit coordinators.
 - c. Maintain accurate records to document police canine activities.
 - d. Recommend and oversee the procurement of needed equipment.
 - e. Be responsible for scheduling all police canine-related activities.
 - f. Ensure the police canine team is scheduled for continuous training to maximize the capabilities of the team according to P.O.S.T. standards.
 - g. Ensure all canine training records are properly and accurately maintained.

B. Obtaining Canines:

1. Canines considered for use by the Canine Unit will be obtained by one of the following methods:
 - a. Private citizen donation
 - b. City/County Animal Control Shelter
 - c. Private purchase by handler
 - d. Purchase by the City of Stockton with approval of the unit lieutenant.
2. Ownership:
 - a. Any canine purchased, donated, or obtained from the Animal Control Shelter shall become the property of the City of Stockton. Purchases and donations shall be pursuant to a contract addressed in subsection "b" of this section.
 - b. Pursuant to this order, a contract must be entered into by and between the City of Stockton and the transferor or donor of the animal in question, setting forth the rights and obligations of both parties thereof.
3. Care for the Police Canine and Equipment:
 - a. The City of Stockton will provide a dog run to be used at the handler's residence. The size and materials must be approved prior to construction. The City of Stockton shall provide all necessary equipment, materials, and labor to construct the dog run.
 - b. Services of a veterinarian, grooming, and kenneling of the animal shall be paid for by the City of Stockton.
 - (1) Routine medical services and kenneling services shall be conducted by the current authorized veterinarian and kennel service.
 - (2) Prior approval must be obtained from the program lieutenant if a situation arises that necessitates the services of a veterinarian other

than the current authorized veterinarian and it is not deemed an emergency.

c. Dog Food:

- (1) Food will be provided until the dog is no longer utilized. Under no circumstances will food be provided to more than one dog per handler without prior approval of the program lieutenant.
- (2) The amount of food shall be reasonable for the dog's size and weight.
- (3) A canine handler will obtain dog food from a designated distributor as directed by the program lieutenant.
- (4) A handler in need of any additional equipment or supplies shall complete a Requisition Form PD1132 and submit the form to the program lieutenant for approval. Once approved, the handler will take the approved requisition form to Stores at the City Municipal Service Center and obtain the requested items.
 - (a) Other than dog food, no additional equipment will be issued without the approved requisition form.

d. Equipment – Leash, Harness, Choke Chain, etc.

- (1) If any equipment is temporarily issued to a potential handler, or when a handler rotates out of the unit, the equipment shall be returned to the program lieutenant.
- (2) The handler shall properly maintain all Department equipment under their control and assure the equipment is clean and in serviceable condition.
- (3) The unit coordinator will conduct routine inspections to ensure the condition of equipment conforms to this policy. The inspections will also include police canine vehicles.

4. Approval must be obtained from the lieutenant in charge of the Canine Unit prior to taking any of the following actions:

- a. Designation of a dog as officially in training for use in the Canine Unit.
- b. Obtaining food and/or veterinarian services provided by the City of Stockton.
- c. Designation of a dog as "Field Ready" for use in the Canine Unit.
- d. Any training of a police department canine and/or handler through any source or agency other than the Stockton Police Department or its designated trainers.
- e. Canine demonstrations.

C. Officer Assignment to the Police Canine Unit:

1. An officer desiring to become a canine handler shall submit a written request stating reasons for wanting to join. The request shall be accompanied by a written recommendation from the officer's supervisor (directed to the program lieutenant) and should include a specific description of the officer's understanding and application of the four core concepts of Procedural Justice. The lieutenant, the coordinator, and the trainer will review the request and recommendation. A joint recommendation will then be forwarded to the Chief of Police for approval or denial of the request.
2. An officer who desires to join the Canine Unit shall submit complete general history and background of his/her canine. This information must be verifiable.
 - a. The general history and background must include, but is not limited to the following:

- (1) Canine's place and date of birth.
 - (2) Any and all training the canine received prior to being obtained by the officer.
 - (3) Any prior employment of the canine by other agencies.
 - (4) Any incidents or canine demeanor that may be indicative of potential problem areas, i.e., bites, overly aggressive behavior, etc.
 - (5) Copies of any documents in support of the above.
- b. Final approval of both canine and handler will be made by the Chief of Police.
- c. The following are minimum qualifications for the assignment of Police Canine Handler:
 - (1) City of Stockton police officer currently off probation.
 - (2) Reside in an adequately fenced, single family residence which has a minimum five-foot-high fence with locking gates.
 - (3) Agree to be assigned to the position for a minimum three-year obligation. The Chief of Police may amend this commitment if necessary.
 - (4) Completion of a Departmental Procedural Justice training course.
3. Both handlers and canines will be certified on an annual basis, in a manner following P.O.S.T. recommendations, based upon courses developed by the canine trainer(s).
 - a. The trainer(s) shall supply the program lieutenant with written documentation of the quarterly certifications.
 - b. Police canines shall receive training as defined in current contract with the Department's canine training provider.
 - c. Police canine handlers are encouraged to engage in additional training with the approval of the unit coordinator.
 - d. In order to ensure that all training is consistent, no handler, trainer, or outside vendor is authorized to train in a standard that is contrary to the policies of the Stockton Police Department.
 - e. No canine and/or handler failing P.O.S.T. Canine Certification shall be deployed in the field until certification is achieved. When practical, pending successful certification, the canine handler shall be temporarily reassigned to regular patrol duties.

D. Preparation for Utilizing a Canine

1. Prior to the use of a canine to search for or apprehend a suspect(s), the canine handler and/or the supervisor on scene shall carefully consider all pertinent information that is reasonably available at the time. The information should include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. The suspect's age or estimate thereof
 - b. The nature of the suspected offense
 - c. Any potential danger to the public and/or other officers at the scene if the canine is used
 - d. The degree of resistance or threatened resistance, if any, the suspect has shown
 - e. The potential for escape or flight if the police dog is not utilized
 - f. The potential for injury to officers or the public caused by the suspect if the canine is not utilized

E. Use of Police Canines:

1. Properly-utilized dogs serve as a valuable resource to the Department. Their use shall be administered with sound police practices in mind.
 - a. Canine use should be tempered with an awareness of the public's sensitivity and occasional outright fear of dogs.
 - b. Every effort must be made to prevent any unnecessary confrontation with the public. When reasonable, efforts to deescalate situations should be considered and employed, to include the application of Procedural Justice principles.
 - c. The following guidelines shall determine intended use of canines:
 - (1) Officer Personal Safety
 - (a) The police canine offers safety to the officer in that it can deter potential assailants. It also can come to the officer's aid when an assault occurs. As with any police weapon, the canine should be used only when it appears obvious other less-aggressive measures of defense would not be effective.
 - (2) Apprehension of Fleeing Suspects
 - (a) The decision whether to send a police canine in pursuit of a fleeing suspect shall rest with the handler who shall consider the crime committed, urgency of apprehension, obvious age of the person fleeing, and the possibility of halting the suspect by verbally warning the suspect that if he/she does not halt the canine will be deployed and they may be bitten.
 - (3) Search
 - (a) If an officer determines that a need exists for a canine to search an area or building for a suspect, the officer shall first determine that the suspect is contained to a specific area.
 - (b) Once containment has been established, the officer should insure that the area or building does not become contaminated with the scent of officers, alarm company personnel, or other persons. The canine's search will be more effective if other persons remain away from the search area prior to the canine's approach.
 - (c) Upon arrival of the canine unit, the officer in charge of the scene shall apprise the handler of the details of the incident. Prior to release of the canine, the handler shall shout a warning. The warning shall include the following:
 - 1) "This is the Stockton Police Department canine unit. Give up and come forward or the police dog will be sent in. The dog will find you and bite you."
 - 2) The warning shall be made at least twice, and it would be desirable at some point to have the canine bark. Care should be taken to insure that barking does not obscure any responding voice from the suspect(s). If a suspect is located, the handler shall take steps to prevent the occurrence of unnecessary bites from the canine.

NOTE: This announcement is only required for building or area searches.

- (d) If a suspect(s) flees from officers, other back-up officers should not go in foot pursuit, but should remain with the canine handler and await instructions. If the canine is sent in pursuit of the suspect(s), the canine shall remain under the visual and/or verbal control of the handler at all times.

(4) Approved Crowd Control

- (a) Respect for the public's sensitivity and often outright fear of dogs requires that exposure and confrontation with citizens be avoided. In such instances, dogs will be deployed only with the express approval of the supervisor in charge of the incident. The supervisor will use the following guidelines to determine if using a canine would be effective:
 - 1) Are available resources sufficient to effectively control the crowd?
 - 2) Could the crowd be more effectively controlled if dogs were deployed?
 - 3) Is there an immediate threat to life and/or property that could be mitigated by the use of dogs?

(5) Mutual Aid Requests

- (a) requests by another agency for use of Stockton Police canines shall be cleared through the Watch Commander. Final evaluation of the request shall be cleared with the handler. It is the handler's responsibility to know the capabilities and limitations of their canine. When possible, canine officers should attempt to assist another agency. If the request is beyond the capabilities and limitations, or is unreasonable, rejection reasons shall be communicated to the Watch Commander. Should a Stockton Police Canine be utilized for another agency, under no circumstances shall it be done in a manner contrary to Stockton Police Department policies and procedures.

(6) Demonstration Requests

All requests for canine unit public demonstrations shall be made via the canine coordinator. The coordinator will determine whether the demonstration is possible, and if so, will make appropriate arrangements.

One intent of demonstrations is to increase public confidence and trust in the police canine unit. To that end, handlers will apply the principles of Procedural Justice during all demonstrations.

(7) Use of Narcotic Detection Canines

A narcotic detection trained canine may be used in accordance with current law to:

- (a) Assist in the search for narcotics during a search warrant service.

- (b) Obtain a search warrant by using the detection canine in support of probable cause.
 - (c) Search vehicles, buildings, bags, and any other articles deemed necessary.
 - (d) A narcotic detection canine may be used to search persons for narcotics.
- (8) Generally, the decision to deploy a canine shall remain with the handler; however, a supervisor sufficiently apprised of the situation may decide not to deploy the canine.

F. Securing Canines:

1. When a police canine is not directly involved in a police function, or imminent use is not reasonably anticipated, it shall be properly secured within the police vehicle. If a window is left partially open for ventilation purposes, it shall open only to the point at which the canine cannot extend its head outside the vehicle.

A window equipped with a protective screen, or a similar device designed to prohibit the canine from exiting or extending its head through the window may be opened to any desired position. Common sense and sound judgment shall dictate when an officer will leave a window down for the purpose of potential canine exit. Accidental bites and/or incidents involving an unwanted exit must be anticipated. The responsibility for these considerations rests with the handler.

A "potential exit" in this section refers to a situation in which the canine handler anticipates a need for the canine to exit (i.e. a fight in progress when the officer arrives on the scene with the situation still volatile). When the situation is under control, the canine shall again be secured to prohibit extending its head outside the police vehicle.

2. Off-duty Activity

- a. When the canine is off duty, it should be contained in a run provided for that purpose. This would not preclude the canine from being allowed outside the run at the handler's discretion when the safety of all persons, as well as the canine, is first considered. All efforts are to be exercised to prevent the canine from confronting the public while off duty.
- b. When a handler assigned to the Canine Unit wishes to take a Department canine out of town (i.e. vacation with the handler), written permission must be obtained from the program lieutenant. While out of town, the handler will continue to use safety measures with the canine to prevent a confrontation with the public.

3. Reporting for Tour of Duty

- a. Canine handlers reporting to work shall have their dogs with them. This will preclude returning to the handler's residence to pick up the dog while on duty. The dog shall remain with the officer during the officer's shift.
- b. The handler shall use sound judgment in the method of transporting the canine to and from work or other assignments. The canine shall be prevented from exiting the vehicle or biting. If the handler anticipates leaving the canine in the vehicle for a long period of time, the vehicle shall be secured to prevent confrontations with the public.

Handlers requiring a "dog box" will be issued one of the several already owned by the City.

G. Dog Bites/Incidents:

1. Bites
 - a. All bites suffered by a person that were inflicted by a Stockton Police canine, whether inflicted on or off duty, shall be reported immediately to a supervisor. Canine bites in the line of duty are considered "use of force" and must be reported accordingly.
 2. First- Aid for Bites
 - a. The canine handler is responsible for assuring that medical treatment is obtained for dog bite victims. If circumstances are such that the handler cannot directly ensure treatment, the handler will notify an immediate supervisor who will ensure medical treatment is provided. If the bite involves a skin puncture, the handler will forward a copy of the report to animal control.
 3. Incidents
 - a. Any incident involving a Stockton Police Department canine which results in an injury, or the claim of an injury, shall be reported by the handler. The handler shall complete the appropriate written report.
- H. Canine Administrative Leave:
1. The Chief of Police may, at his discretion, place a canine on administrative leave. This may occur for a variety of reasons, the most obvious being questionable action by the canine or its handler.
 2. Temporary administrative leave may be authorized by the Watch Commander and will be reviewed by the Chief of Police as to the length of leave. A canine handler is prohibited from using a canine placed on leave until the leave is lifted.
- I. On-Duty Injury to police canine or handler:
1. Should a canine become injured, the canine should be taken to a veterinary office. If the injury is minor and during business hours, the canine should be taken to the dog's normal veterinary office by the canine handler. If the canine receives a serious injury, it should be taken to the nearest emergency veterinary office for treatment.
 2. If the canine's handler becomes incapacitated or is unable to provide care for its canine, another on-duty canine handler should be summoned to provide care for the canine. In the event another canine handler is not available, a patrol supervisor and canine unit supervisor(s) should be notified.
- J. Rules of Conduct While in The Presence of Canines:
1. Do's
 - a. Treat the canine as you would a dog owned by a friend. Be friendly but do not pet the canine without permission from the canine handler
 - b. Respect the handler's wishes with respect to the canine
 - c. Stay away from the canine during training unless assisting the handler
 - d. Stand still if you are bitten or think you are about to be bitten
 - e. Avoid Furtive or sudden movements in the presence of a canine
 2. Don'ts
 - a. Do not tease a canine
 - b. Do not try to entice the canine to break away or disobey commands
 - c. Do not use any command you have heard the handler use
 - d. Do not try to agitate the canine while in a police vehicle or elsewhere
 - e. Do not feed a canine without the permission of the handler
 - f. Do not engage in violent or simulated violent behavior with the handler in the canine's presence
 - g. Do not bring another canine around a canine vehicle

- h. Do not enter a canine vehicle unless there is an emergency, or at the direction of a canine handler
- i. Do not stare intensely at a canine